

Murray Arts Advisory Board
Minutes for January 19, 2010

Attendance: Mildred Horton, Sharon Whitney, Judy Baxendale, Wendi Miller, Elaine Judd,
Mary Black, Jennifer Davies, Mary Ann Kirk (staff)

Excused: Kathleen Sorenson

1. New board member Wendi Miller was introduced.
2. Minutes for November 19, 2010 were approved with a correction for winter season ticket sales and a clarification about how and when board members would make phone calls to former season ticket holders. Mary Ann originally thought our season ticket sales were down from last year, but we actually slightly surpassed last year's number.
3. Mary Ann has not heard how attendance went for the ballet and Messiah concert. Missoula Children's Theater had 108 kids audition which was the second highest we have ever had with 58 children who were cast. Free tickets were offered to those who didn't make it. Approximately 700 people attended the performance which was also fairly high. Mary Ann felt that the new email communication was helping get the word out.
4. Our local art groups did not like the idea of reserved seating at the amphitheater. Some wondered if we could try it for our shows. Mary Ann noted it would take people to stand by these seats. She barely has enough volunteers for the ticket booth and the tech crew has other assignments such as the handicapped parking and seating, backstage and facility issues, or even emergencies like beehives that are found in the seating area when people sit down. Board members agreed the performing arts center would be able to handle this better with actual assigned seats. The biggest question is whether we would really make that much more money. If we redo the amphitheater, we may be able to install actual chairs in the middle which would make more sense.
5. The operational plan for the performing arts center will be presented to the city council during a study session on February 16 at 5:30 pm. Board members liked the idea of having their normal monthly meeting directly following this meeting. Mary Ann will reserve a room at City Hall sometime around 6:15 pm. Board members are encouraged to attend the formal presentation if they are available. Mary felt the meeting for the historic downtown update was fairly repetitious although there were some additional people who had not seen the plan yet.
6. The county council reviewed a proposed process to apply for county funds for cultural facilities. The proposal suggested applications be accepted after September 1. Applications should include a feasibility study for financing, operational plans, and architectural designs. Applicants must have 10% of the funding request in place or already spent. Funding requests cannot exceed 50% of the overall costs. If an application is deemed incomplete, funds will be available to provide technical expertise to complete the professional elements of the application where necessary. Mary Ann thought the

money the city spends on property acquisition would qualify for the 10% commitment. She has asked the foundation to complete a feasibility study of potential revenue sources and interested donors. We also need to update an architectural design with approximate costs. We will have an operational plan ready next month. Currently, the county does not have funds. But she felt it is important that we are prepared to begin the initial process so our project is reviewed and evaluated by the time funds become available. Mary Ann thought the building cost would still be around \$12 million with an additional amount for equipment and features such as sound, lights, piano, etc. Mildred thought that the equipment costs can be paid through donations. A bond election is one option and could lock in a low interest rate as long as the building is completed within a certain time frame. The city is looking at a parking structure as a priority to get things going. Board members agreed this is needed.

7. Two groups have approached the city with potential programs. One group would like to offer camps for youth interested in movie acting or film making. The board would like to know more about their professional experience. Mary Ann will also talk to Ryan Moffet about film making classes after school or during the summer since he teaches these classes at the high school. Board members thought film making may have interest in the community. They didn't like the idea of combining elementary kids with junior high and high school kids. The \$150 cost seemed high but several board members have paid that much for similar experiences. Sharon said her daughter participated in the after-school film making project we did several years ago in junior high and she went on to film making at BYU.

Another group made up of several Murray High graduates have developed a theater improv group. They are looking for a venue and performance opportunities. Mary Ann was not sure the amphitheater would work. Elaine agreed that improv contains little subtleties that work better in an intimate setting. There was some concern about potential content. Elaine was willing to attend a performance. The Murray High Little Theater would be a nice venue if the group was good. We could possibly include them in our winter series.

8. Grant applications were reviewed. Most of the applications are the same as last year. The school applications usually vary except the Murray High art fest. Mary suggested we add a line for the applicants to print their names besides a signature because you can't read the names. Mary asked about the grant period. Our next fiscal year goes from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. However some groups use a calendar fiscal year. They were asked to circle what time period they are using. Sharon asked for clarification if these groups are non-profit and can they pay a director. Mary Ann said they are non-profit groups and may pay a director. The ballet does have a non-profit entity for performances which are separate from their studio class work. Wendi asked about the reserve funds and what they use that for. Mary Ann explained that a reserve equal to three years can be kept for emergency needs which could help them sustain a program if funding was cut off. But a grant should not be used to build their reserve funds. The Miss Murray Pageant is funded from a different fund and has a different focus but the board has been

asked to review this request each year since Mary Ann's budget includes Fun Days and the float.

The following grants were reviewed with board member recommendations:

Murray Symphony requested \$5000. Recommended \$5000. The budget reflects a building rental for Granite Community ed which in turn pays Clint as the director. Mildred thought the grant should reflect the facility and director expenses separately. Provides eight concerts which includes the swing/jazz band.

The Murray Concert Band requested \$2500. Recommended \$2500. They did cash match this year with more donations and admissions. Provides four concerts plus the Fun Days Sunrise service.

Ballet Center requested \$2500. Recommended \$2500. Provides Ballet Under the Stars plus other programs in the winter series along with a free matinee for schools.

Murray High Arts Fest requested \$1000. Recommended \$1000. Our grant provides professional artist stipends.

Miss Murray Pageant requested \$4100. Recommended \$4100. The grant is used for scholarships for the queens who spend their summer riding the city float.

Woodstock Elementary requested \$1200. No recommendation. The grant was for a permanent decorative tile project for a new building. We haven't typically funded something like this. Jennifer thought it was creative and different. Mary felt it was too much money. The project included 12 tiles but didn't describe how big. It was unsure how many and in what ways the children would be involved in creating them. The budget included a payment for a parent volunteer to coordinate the project but did not reflect a professional artist stipend. Board members wanted more information.

Hillcrest Jr High Spanish class requested \$125. Recommended 0. The money would be used to purchase clay for a Spanish curriculum activity. This was discussed in a previous meeting. Board members felt that materials should be provided by the school. We don't have enough money to provide materials for yearly art projects. We would be more interested in providing something that sustains a program over time.